

2013 Political Sign Information

Washington State Department of Transportation Letter
Political Sign Advisement Letter

Mason County
Mason County Code Chapter 17.05 section 17.05.025 Temporary Signs

City of Shelton
Municipal Code Chapter 20.38.100 Temporary Signs

Dear Candidate:

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) wishes to take this opportunity to advise political candidates about the placement of campaign signs and placards along state highways.

Revised code of Washington (RCW) 47.42, the Highway Advertising Control Act, regulates signing on Interstate highways, Primary highways, and highways that are part of the Scenic and Recreational system. Signs erected on private property adjacent to these highways must comply with the Highway Advertising Control Act, rules contained in Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 468-66, and applicable local agency sign codes.

In accordance with WAC 468-66-050, ***Sign Classifications and Specific Provisions***, temporary political campaign signs are identified and regulated as a type of on-premise sign intended to express a property owner's endorsement of a political candidate or initiative. Prior to placing signs, WSDOT recommends checking with the property owner for approval, and to determine property line locations. Campaign signs are allowed under the following regulations:

- 1) Temporary political campaign signs are limited to a maximum size of thirty-two square feet
- 2) Temporary political campaign signs must be removed within ten days following the election
- 3) Sign installers must have permission of the underlying property owner prior to placing signs
- 4) Temporary political campaign signs are subject to all other applicable provisions of RCW 47.42 and WAC 468-66 that pertain to Type 3 on-premise signs

In addition to the above restrictions, **the erection of temporary political campaign signs within the right-of-way of all state highways is prohibited. Accordingly, signs placed within the right-of-way of any state highway are subject to removal by the Washington State Department of Transportation.**

Also, RCW 47.36.180(1) states in part that it is unlawful to erect any structure, sign, or device visible from a city street, county road, or state highway that simulates any directional, warning, or danger sign likely to be mistaken for such a sign. Therefore, a campaign sign cannot be designed in a manner that resembles an official traffic control sign.

If you should have any questions about the placement of campaign signs along state highways, please contact Pat O'Leary at (360) 705-7296 or olearyp@wsdot.wa.gov

We sincerely hope that candidates for public office will observe the laws and regulations enacted to limit driver distraction and protect and preserve the roadside beauty of our state. Thank you in advance for your courtesy in this matter.

Washington State Department of Transportation

Mason County

17.05.025 – Temporary Signs

Temporary signs are those signs associated with a particular event or short-term activity such as, but not limited to; agricultural or garage sales signs, grand opening displays, festival, carnival or parade signs, political signs and real estate signs, which are to be removed within ten days when the event or activity ends. Temporary signs are allowed in all rural areas of the county and the Shelton. UGA subject to the following limitations:

- A.) Signs shall not be placed within the county right-of-way unless otherwise approved with a road-use permit from the public works department, and with adjacent property owner's permission, except as allowed under section 17.03.202(a)
- B.) Signs shall not be posted in a manner or location that may cause visual obstruction or a visual safety hazard for traffic especially in and around intersections, driveways and other access points.
- C.) It shall be the responsibility of the owner to remove a temporary sign within ten days after such sign is no longer serving its purpose including, but not limited to; the end of an event, meeting, festival, carnival or parade; the sale, lease, or rent of property; the end of an annual election cycle; the end of any type of sale.
- D.) County officials shall have the authority to remove signs when not placed in accordance with this section.

Note: More information regarding rules for signs may be found in Mason County Ordinance Number 134-08 and Mason County Code and Development Regulations Title 17.

City of Shelton Municipal Code

20.38.100 Temporary Signs

E.) Political Signs. No sign permit is required. Political signs or posters may be placed only upon private property with owner's consent. Signs in the residential zones, which includes neighborhood residential (NR), and professional office/residential mix (PR-A) zones, shall not exceed ten square feet in sign area. Signs placed in the commercial and industrial zones, which includes the downtown (DT), general commercial (GC), commercial residential valley (CR-V), commercial residential Goose Lake (CR-G), low-intensity mixed use (MU), low-intensity commercial (LI-C), medical educational (ME), commercial industrial (CI) and the industrial (I) zones shall not exceed thirty-two square feet in sign area. The signs shall not exceed six feet in height. Signs shall not be posted or attached to trees, telephone poles, power poles or other public utility facilities. It is unlawful to place, erect or maintain any political sign so as to pose a visibility hazard to pedestrian or motor vehicle traffic along streets, sidewalks, or street corners. Political signs shall be removed within seven days after the election in which the candidate or issue advertised on a sign has been determined. For a successful candidate in a primary election, the sign may remain until the final election, but shall be removed within seven days after the election. The candidate or committee for which the sign is displayed shall be responsible for its removal and subject to the penalties as provided in this chapter